

## **A STUDY ON MICRO ENTERPRISE PROMOTED BY KUDUMBASREE (NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP'S) FOR RURAL WOMEN IN THRISSUR DISTRICT OF KERALA**

*Ashwani Anil & Jahanara*

*Research Scholar Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication, SHUATS, Prayagraj, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

*This study was attempted in MALA Block Panchayat of Thrissur district of Kerala in 2021-2022. With the help of random sampling method, 120 respondents were selected and data were collected by personal interview method by using pre-tested interview schedule and later appropriate statistical analysis was done to find out the meaningful result. Ex-post facto research design was adopted. The study findings showed that majority of the respondents strongly agree (55%) to the statement that work increased household tension, followed by work increased tension among members and neighbourhood (39.17%) and work increased workload (52.50%) respectively towards the negative problems in beneficiaries of Kudumbasree. It was analyzed that most of the respondents agrees to the statement (39.17%) that lack of sufficient fund, followed by strongly agrees to that lack of technical know-how (55%). It was understood that majority of the respondents agrees that lack of information and strongly disagrees to those seasonal problems towards the difficulties in area of marketing respectively.*

**KEYWORDS:** Kudumbashree, Micro-Enterprise, Women Empowerment

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Kudumbashree is the poverty eradication and women's empowerment program implemented by the State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM) of the Government of Kerala, started in 1998 with a major objective to promote empowerment of women in Kerala. In Malayalam, 'Kudumbashree' means 'prosperity of the family through women'. Kudumbashree was set up in 1997 by the Kerala State Government in response to the policy shift in ensuring devolution of powers to the Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Kerala, and the People's Plan Campaign (PPC), which attempted to democratize and decentralize planning, budgeting and overall governance. The aim of the study is to provide policy recommendations on best practices for an integrated IPV strategy, based on the learnings from the experience of the Kudumbashree Mission. By and large, while gender-based violence (GBV) is acknowledged and discussed to a large extent in this program, discussions on IPV are restricted by codes of honour embedded in patriarchal cultures. The program has been reviewed for its interventions on GBV and IPV, within the political and socio-cultural context of Kerala. However, the key elements and strategies of the intervention are captured and analyzed for purposes of generic relevance regardless of external condition. Its mission is to eradicate poverty in 10 years through community actions with the help of

NHG's (Neighbourhood Help Groups). For the purpose a lot of programs were initiated by Kudumbasree. One among them is promoting Micro enterprises. Micro enterprises play a vital role in poverty alleviation and socio-economic empowerment of the poor, and helps for balanced development of economy with low capital investment (Pakrisamy, A. (2006).

Kudumbasree is a community network which covers the whole state. It was extended to cover the entire state in three phases during 2000-2002. Kudumbasree has a three-tier structure including Neighbourhood Groups, Area Development Society, and Community Development Societies. The community structure was evolved initially in Alappuzha Municipality and Malappuram in Early 1990s. Kudumbasree provides membership to all adult women, and it is limited to one membership per family. For the development of micro enterprises, mission gave more importance for Local Economic Development (LED). That is to increase economic activity in local areas it gave more emphasis to promote local production and local consumption. By facing various constraints Kudumbashree paved the way for poverty alleviation, empowerment of women and for the overall development of Kerala especially through microenterprises. (Singh, Indubhusan and Ushakumari (2007).

Hence the present Research Study looks into the role of micro enterprises in economic empowerment of Women in Kerala by taking the specific case of micro enterprises functioning under 'Kudumbasree' in Thrissur. There is high scope for micro entrepreneurial development in Thrissur and majority of women belongs to poor family. So, if we are successful in stating the fact that there is women empowerment in Thrissur by being a member in Kudumbashree micro enterprises, this can be taken as a model for overall economic empowerment of women in Kerala. But how far they generated a positive impact on the life of women is yet to be studied. (Paul Oliver 2010).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study was conducted in the Thrissur District in Kerala state Mala block is selected purposively for present study.

In Mala block of Thrissur district there are 9 panchayats. Out of which, four villages were selected through random sampling. The list of selected villages was Kuruvilassery, Mala, Pazhookara and Vadama. The structured interview schedule was prepared for data collection. Ex-post facto design was used for this study. The statistical tools like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation was used to interpret the data and for drawing logical conclusion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile Characteristics of the Respondents**

S.No.	Independent variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Young age group	19	15.83
		Middle age group	81	67.50
		Old age group	20	16.67
2	Employment	Employed	97	80.83
		Unemployed	23	19.17
3	Category	General	79	65.83
		OBC	26	21.67
		SC/ST	15	12.50
4	Religion	Hindu	52	43.33
		Islam	26	21.67
		Christian	42	35.00
		Married	86	71.67
5	Marital status	Unmarried	21	17.50
		Widow	0	0.00
		Divorced	13	10.83
6	Educational status	Illiterate	12	10.00
		Primary	25	20.83
		High school	77	64.17
		Higher secondary & above	6	5.00
7	Family size	Small	78	65.00
		Medium	34	28.33
		Large	8	6.67
8	House pattern	Roofing tile	36	30.00
		Sheet	79	65.83
		Concrete	5	4.17
9	Sanitary facility	Available	87	72.50
		Unavailable	33	27.50
		Pipe water	10	8.33
10	Source of drinking water	Public well	12	10.00
		Bore well	55	45.84
		Well	43	35.83

It was understood that from table. 1 more than two-third of the respondents were middle aged (67.50%), followed by old (16.67%) and young (15.83%) aged beneficiaries respectively. It can be seen that higher proportion of the respondents were employed (80.83%) while the remaining (19.17%) proportion of the respondents were unemployed. It was evident that more than two-third of the respondents belong to general category (65.83%), followed by OBC (21.67%) and SC/ST (12.50%) respectively. It was observed that higher percentage of the respondents were educated up to high school (64.17%), followed by primary (20.83%), illiterate (10%) and only few (5%) of the respondents had higher secondary & above level of education. It can be seen that majority of the respondents had small family size (65%), followed by medium (28.33%) and large (6.67%) size of family respectively. It was revealed that most of the respondents were Hindu (43.33%), followed by Christian (35%) and Islam (21.67%) respectively.

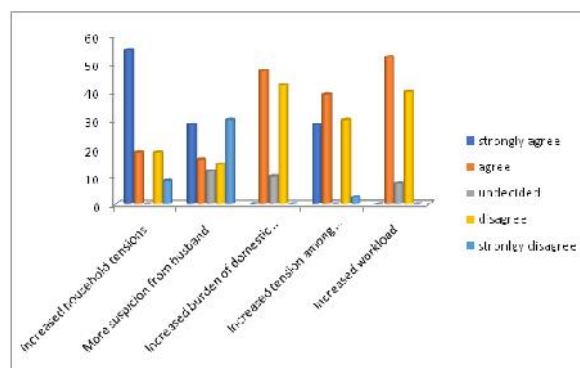
It can be seen that most of the respondents were married (71.67%), followed by unmarried (17.50%) and remaining were divorced (10.83%). None of them were widow. It was seen that most of the respondents had sheet type of housing patter (65.83%), followed by roofing tile (30%) and concrete (4.17%) type of housing pattern. Most of the respondents revealed that sanitary facility was available (72.50%), whereas remaining (27.50%) revealed that sanitary

facility was not available. It can be understood that majority of the respondents had bore well (45.84%) as their source of drinking water, followed by well (35.83%), public well (10%) and pipe water (8.33%) respectively as their source of drinking water. (S. Renuka Devi (2020)).

**Table 2: Distribution of Negative Problems in Beneficiaries of Kudumbashree**

S. No.	Statements	Responses(n=120)									
		Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%
1	Increased household tensions	66	55	22	18.33	0	0.00	22	18.33	10	8.33
2	More suspicion from husband	34	28.34	19	15.83	14	11.67	17	14.17	36	30.00
3	Increased burden of domestic responsibilities	0	0.00	57	47.50	12	10.00	51	42.50	0	0.00
4	Increased tension among members/neighbourhood	34	28.34	47	39.17	0	0.00	36	30.00	3	2.50
5	Increased workload	0	0.00	63	52.50	9	7.50	48	40.00	0	0.00

From table.2, it was seen that majority of the respondents strongly agree (55%) to the statement that work increased household tension, followed by strongly disagree (30%) to the statement that more suspicious from husband, agree to the statement that work increased burdens of domestic responsibilities (47.50%), work increased tension among members and neighbourhood (39.17%) and work increased workload (52.50%) respectively towards the negative problems in beneficiaries of Kudumbashree. (Jishnu Cheeroli (2018)).



**Figure 1: Distribution of Negative Problems in Beneficiaries of Kudumbashree.**

## CONCLUSION

Based on the present study, it is observed that most of the beneficiaries were middle aged and they were employed, belonged to general category, Hindus with high school level of education possessing small size of family and married. They had sheet type of house pattern with available sanitary facility, utilizes the bore well as their source of drinking water. Those beneficiaries reported positive role towards the Kudumbashree micro enterprise in enhancement of women condition and empowerment. Increased household tension was the negative problem, lack of know-how was the difficulty in area of production, involvement of middle men & low price and profit were the difficulty in area of marketing and gender discrimination was the first and foremost constraint among the beneficiaries in the entrepreneurial development. Whereas, government assistance along with technical training were the most suggested prospects given by the beneficiaries.

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